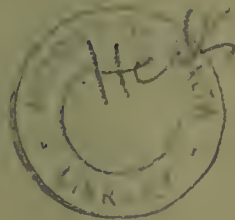


4421(1)

1 *W. Alcock*  
2 *T. Marsden*



BOROUGH OF WATFORD



# Annual Report

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the year

**1957**



W. ALCOCK

M.B., Ch.B., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health

K. H. MARSDEN

F.A.P.H.I.

Chief Public Health Inspector

*V. C.*



STAFF OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health, and Divisional Medical Officer for South West Hertfordshire:

W. Alcock, M.B., Ch.B., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health and Assistant County Medical Officer:

E. W. G. Birch, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Appointed 23.9.1957)

Chief Public Health Inspector:

K. H. Marsden

Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector:

G. F. Willcox

District Public Health Inspectors:

E. Ellerington

J. L. Willoughby

T. B. Rosamond

G. E. Hayne

Chief Clerk Borough and Divisional Health Departments:

Miss J. E. M. Sherlock

Clerical Staff: -

Miss M. Johnson

Miss M. James

Miss E. Jerrett

---

## COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The members of the Health Committee

1956 - 1957

---

Chairman:	Alderman L. C. Johnson
Vice-Chairman:	Councillor Mrs. M. Higgins
The Worshipful	
The Mayor:	Councillor A. Abbott
The Deputy Mayor:	Alderman E. C. Amey

Alderman G. A. Musk	Councillor F. Mackenzie
Alderman Mrs. A. Primett	Councillor H. A. E. Mounter
Councillor A. Arkinstall	Councillor J. S. Oliver
Councillor T. D. Bathurst	Councillor J. R. Rourke
Councillor J. P. Cook	Councillor Miss D. M. Scawen
Councillor J. R. Hicks	Councillor J. Seymour
Councillor T. Johnson	Councillor G. W. Smith

---

Health Department,

Town Hall,

WATFORD.

September, 1958.

TO THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report upon the work of the Public Health Department for the year 1957.

My report commences with the vital statistics for the year. Few of these call for special comment, but those relating to the deaths of infants under one year require an explanation. The infantile mortality rate is twice that for the previous year. For the same period however the stillbirth rate was halved, and therein lies the clue. Of the total births - live and stillborn, fewer died during or just before birth, but some only just survived this hazard for, of the 29 infant deaths during the year, 9 died within 24 hours and 9 more were dead within a week or less, of birth. It is this wastage of child life at or around the time of birth - the perinatal mortality as it is called - which represents the hard core of infant deaths, and upon which further research is needed to discover the primary causes.

For the third consecutive year no maternal deaths have occurred.

Of the other principal death rates only that for cancer shows a disturbing upward trend. It will be noted that the number of deaths from lung cancer has increased from 21 in 1956 to 37 in the year under review. The latest report of the Medical Research Council has now demonstrated, by statistical analysis, the close relationship between smoking and lung cancer. It has been shown that with regard to lung cancer in men there is:-

1. A higher mortality in smokers than in non-smokers.
2. A higher mortality in heavy smokers than in light smokers.
3. A higher mortality in cigarette smokers than in pipe smokers.
4. A higher mortality in those who continue to smoke than in those who give it up.

Many will argue that these findings are based on mere statistics, - "and you can prove anything by means of statistics". It is true that in the hands of those untrained in their use, and of the frankly unscrupulous, statistics can be perverted to produce quite unreliable results. In the hands of trained statisticians however the statistical method is an instrument of precision which can yield extremely valuable information and ever-increasing use is being made of it. Notwithstanding the fact that precise knowledge of the cause of cancer is



incomplete, I consider that the evidence linking lung cancer with smoking is now so strong as to justify this disease being regarded as essentially preventable and therefore to be attacked with the same energy and resolution which has led to the extinction or great reduction of so many other epidemic diseases. Since 1950, over 100,000 deaths from lung cancer have occurred in this country alone. At present the yearly death rate is around 18,000 and is mounting annually. It is plainly the duty of the Health Authority to bring home to the public the sombre facts of this problem and your officers have this very much in mind. One of the chief difficulties is to persuade people to change long-established habits and customs. We are more likely to achieve success by attempting by all possible means to dissuade young people from taking up the smoking habit.

In regard to other forms of cancer there is growing evidence that the same statistical approach may yield fruitful results. If we wait until the fundamental cause of cancer is discovered we may have to wait a long time. Extensive research into this problem only seems to widen the field without discovering the fundamental cause. Indeed, the cause of cancer may never be discovered for therein may possibly lie the very secret of life itself. Nature is loth to reveal her innermost secrets. The old lady rarely responds to a knock on the front door. We must go to the back to find out what she is about, and it is by these back-door methods, for example the statistical approach, that much fundamental knowledge is being acquired today. Indeed, such methods have already produced positive results in the case of certain forms of cancer of industrial or occupational origin and epidemiological studies now being conducted into the effects of climate, soil, dietary habits and other exogenous factors, encourage the hope that other forms of cancer may come within the scope of preventive action. Meanwhile, at local level, we have the important task to perform, through our health education organisation, of promoting a campaign of public enlightenment to counteract the ignorance and misconceptions surrounding this disease. Most forms of cancer are amenable to treatment and, in many cases, to cure if discovered and treated at a sufficiently early stage.

The incidence of the commoner notifiable diseases was comparatively light during the year. The somewhat large number of cases of measles was to be expected in the light of the biennial trend of incidence which is regularly manifested by this disease.

No case of diphtheria has occurred in the Borough for the seventh consecutive year - testimony to the efficiency of our diphtheria immunisation campaign. We must not however allow our efforts to slacken in this direction, rather should they be enhanced.

Six cases of poliomyelitis occurred, four of the paralytic form, of whom *three* died, and two non-paralytic cases. Excellent progress was made during the year with the poliomyelitis vaccination campaign, notwithstanding the difficulties and complexities involved, and I desire to pay tribute to the fine teamwork displayed by the Assistant County Medical Officers, the Health Visitors and members of the clerical staff, particularly my Chief Clerk, Miss Sherlock, for the hard work they have put into this venture. It is of course too soon to assess the results but we are very confident of the outcome.

During the early part of the year there were disturbing reports of an outbreak of influenza which, commencing in South China, rapidly spread throughout the Asian Continent

and, in due course, to western countries. Laboratory studies showed the causal agent to be a strain of Influenza A virus with unusual antigenic properties and it became a matter for speculation as to whether we might be faced with an epidemic (or pandemic as such widespread outbreaks should properly be called), similar to that of 1918. In due course the epidemic wave reached this country and, by the end of September and beginning of October, a high incidence was reported in from the schools, the absentee rate reaching in some cases 50 - 60%. The incidence gradually shifted to the older age groups and the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance at one time reported sickness rates 300% in excess of those of the previous year. Apart, however, from its explosive and widespread effects, the epidemic did not appear to differ greatly from previous epidemics of average severity. There were ten deaths attributable to influenza during the year, compared with three for each of the two previous years.

Another disturbing event which gave the department a considerable amount of additional work was the occurrence, all within a short space of time, of three cases of paratyphoid fever. Laboratory investigations identified all three cases with a type of organism commonly found in imported Chinese egg. This commodity is used extensively by the confectionery trade but, in view of the fact that samples are frequently found to contain food poisoning organisms, it must, by regulation, be submitted to adequate heat treatment when so used. Extensive investigations were carried out and consultations with Medical Officers of the Ministry of Health took place, also with Medical Officers of Health of neighbouring authorities where similar cases had occurred - all to no avail. We never discovered precisely how the patients became infected nor were we able to trace the offending batch of Chinese egg back to its source.

Such outbreaks are disturbing. We have almost come to think of them as things of the past. We should remember, however, that we enjoy an immunity to such diseases as the enteric fevers, smallpox and other pestilences, not by virtue of our inherent healthiness as a community, but because, in the main, opportunities for their spread no longer exist. We need, however, to preserve eternal vigilance against a possible breach in our defences.

A notable event which took place during the year was the appointment of Dr. Birch as part-time Deputy Medical Officer of Health. Dr. Birch who was formerly Assistant Medical Officer of Health for Bradford, devotes three-elevenths of his time to the work of the Borough, the remaining eight-elevenths being spent as an Assistant Medical Officer in the County health service. The Committee will recall that, in 1956, the Health Department was the subject of an investigation by the Organisation and Methods section of the Hertfordshire County Council. It was most gratifying to learn that the Department emerged very creditably from this detailed scrutiny. The team reported that the Department was being conducted very efficiently but if the Medical Officer of Health was to extend his work in the fields of public health research and health education propaganda he would need additional medical assistance. A sequel was the appointment of the Deputy Medical Officer of Health. No time was lost in making good use of this additional help because, although Dr. Birch only commenced duty in September, a Home Safety Committee has been set up, to which Dr. Birch acts as Secretary. This is a voluntary body upon which many important organisations in the town are represented, together with members of the Borough Council. There is growing evidence that the Committee has already established itself as a potent ally in our efforts to reduce the serious toll of accidents in the home and I am confident that it is destined to play a most important



role in this field of preventive medicine.

Another appointment during the year which was an innovation for the Health Department, was that of a pupil Public Health Inspector. Mr. Peter King came to us from the Rickmansworth U.D.C. and the enthusiasm and efficiency with which he carries out his duties have amply confirmed the view that we made a good choice.

In May 1956, an important public health preventive measure was inaugurated when fluoridation of the Borough's public water supply commenced. The aim of this measure is to reduce the appallingly high incidence of tooth decay, which is now causing concern throughout the civilised world. Dental caries is one of the most prevalent and widespread diseases and it would be difficult to assess its serious consequences in terms of suffering, digestive disorders and other far-reaching effects on general health. Unfortunately the existing dental manpower is unable to cope with more than about one-third of the needs of the population and there is no prospect of improvement in this respect in the foreseeable future. Moreover, since the rationing of sweets ceased and more refined types of flour have become available to the public, the last few years have seen a marked worsening of the position so far as tooth decay is concerned. Any preventive measure therefore, aimed at reducing the incidence of dental caries, must claim the attention of the public health authorities. There is now abundant and mounting evidence testifying to the effectiveness, safety and practicability of fluoridation of public water supplies as a caries-preventive measure.

The fluoridation plant has worked very satisfactorily during the year. We shall have to wait patiently for another two or three years before the positive results which we confidently anticipate, namely a substantial improvement in the children's teeth, can be expected. Careful dental examinations are being carried out annually upon a cross-section of children in the town and similar examinations are being conducted in another town acting as a control centre, namely, Sutton in Surrey. Both towns are similar in that the water supplies of both are deficient in fluoride but, whereas this substance is being added to the Watford water, it is being withheld from that of Sutton.

Enforcement of the Food Hygiene Regulations continues to give your Public Health Inspectors much work and, at times, difficult problems. The various aspects of this work are referred to in detail in the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector. Education of both food traders and consuming public alike is a disappointingly slow process. I hope to be able to report at a later date upon a scheme of extended health education propaganda which will include food hygiene within its scope.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the members of the Council, especially the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee, for the support they have given me during the year. I am also grateful to the Inspectors and members of the clerical staff of the department for the hard work they have carried out during a very busy year.

I have the honour to be,  
Your obedient Servant

W. ALCOCK.

Medical Officer of Health.



# STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (acres)	5, 275
Estimated civilian population to mid-year 1957	73, 050
Number of inhabited houses (estimated)	22, 307
Rateable value at 1. 4. 57	£1, 376, 148
Sum represented by a penny rate	£5, 800

Number of Live Births ..	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	560	478	1038
Illegitimate	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>40</u>
	<u>580</u>	<u>498</u>	<u>1078</u>

## Number of Still Births -

Legitimate	8	8	16
Illegitimate	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>16</u>

Total number of Births (Live and Still)	1094
Total number of Deaths	800

## Causes of Death of Watford Residents:-

	<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
Tuberculosis, respiratory ... ..	8	13
Tuberculosis, other ... ..	-	3
Syphilitic disease ... ..	1	1
Diphtheria ... ..	-	-
Whooping cough ... ..	-	-
Menigococcal Infections ... ..	2	-
Acute Poliomyelitis ... ..	3	-
Measles ... ..	-	-
Other infective and parasitic disease ... ..	1	-
Malignant neoplasm, stomach ... ..	26	26
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus ... ..	37	21
Malignant neoplasm, breast ... ..	11	16
Malignant neoplasm, uterus ... ..	4	5
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ... ..	91	74
Leukaemia, aleukaemia ... ..	6	4
Diabetes ... ..	3	3
Vascular lesions of nervous system ... ..	91	126
Coronary disease, angina ... ..	114	126
Hypertension with heart disease ... ..	17	15
Other heart disease ... ..	124	132
Other circulatory disease ... ..	34	27
c/f	573	592

		<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
	b/f	573	
Influenza	... ..	10	3
Pneumonia	... ..	47	54
Bronchitis	... ..	39	42
Other diseases of respiratory system		7	7
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum		8	10
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea		6	2
Nephritis and Nephrosis	... ..	5	6
Hyperplasia of prostate	... ..	5	7
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion		-	-
Congenital malformations	... ..	11	5
Other defined and ill-defined diseases		51	37
Motor vehicle accidents	... ..	11	13
All other accidents	... ..	16	21
Suicide	... ..	10	8
Homicide and operations of war		1	-
		<u>800</u>	<u>807</u>

Infantile Deaths (under 1 year) -	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	15	14	29
Illegitimate	-	-	-
	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>29</u>

#### Birth Rate and Death Rate, 1957

	<u>Watford</u>	<u>London Admini- strative County</u>	<u>160 County Boroughs and Great Towns</u>	<u>England and Wales</u>
Rates per 1,000 civilian population				
LIVE BIRTHS	14.8	16.2	16.1	16.1
STILL BIRTHS (per 1,000 total live and still births)	14.6	20.0	22.5	22.5
Death Rate				
All Causes	11.0	11.4	11.5	11.5
Whooping Cough	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Diphtheria	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Influenza	0.14	0.12	0.15	0.15
Acute Poliomyelitis (inc. Polioencephalitis)	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01

	Watford	London Admini- strative County	160 County Boroughs and Great Towns	England and Wales
Pneumonia	0.64	0.65	0.58	0.52
Tuberculosis	0.11	0.13	0.12	0.11
Malignant Neoplasms, Lung, Bronchus	0.51	0.61	0.50	0.43
Coronary Disease Angina Pectoris	1.56	1.70	1.72	1.70
Maternal Mortality Rate - (per 1,000 total births)				
Puerperal Sepsis	0.00			0.08
Other Puerperal Causes	0.00			0.39
All puerperal Causes	0.00			0.47
Infant Mortality Rate (deaths of infants under 1 year)				
ALL INFANTS per 1,000 live births	26.9	21.7	23.5	23.1
Legitimate infants per 1,000 Legitimate live births	27.9			
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 Illegitimate live births	0.0			
NEONATAL MORTALITY (deaths of infants under 4 weeks per 1,000 live births)				
	19.5			16.5

#### COMPARATIVE RATES

	Watford	England and Wales	Watford	England and Wales
	<u>1957</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1956</u>
Birth Rate (Live Births)	14.8	16.1	14.9	15.6
Death Rate	11.0	11.5	11.1	11.7
Infant Mortality Rate	26.9	23.0	13.9	23.8
Maternal Mortality Rate	0.00	0.47	0.00	0.56

# REGISTERED PREMATURE INFANTS - CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO BIRTH

	WEIGHT					TOTAL
	2lbs & under	2-3lbs	3-4lbs	4-5lbs	5-5½lbs	
Number	6	7	7	28	24	72
Number surviving after 24 hours	3	4	6	27	23	63
Number surviving after 8 days	2	2	6	27	23	60
Number surviving at 4 weeks	2	2	6	27	23	60

Prematurity rate of 6.7% - 4.6% 1956 - 6.3% 1955

## CAUSES OF STILLBIRTHS

	1957
Prematurity and Toxaemia	3
Prematurity and other causes	1
Toxaemia	3
Malformation	1
Birth injury	1
Placental Disease	1
Erythroblastosis	-
Maternal Disease	-
Abnormality of Cord	2
Cause unknown	4
Disproportion	-
	<u>16</u>

## CAUSES OF DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Prematurity	5	5	6	3	4	2	3	5
Malformation	5	3	6	5	6	5	5	7
Birth injuries	4	4	2	4	-	3	-	3
Collapse of lung	2	2	3	6	4	1	2	6
Respiratory diseases	2	1	4	6	2	1	4	4
Other diseases of infancy	3	2	1	-	1	1	-	1
Infectious disease	3	-	1	-	-	1	-	3
Accidents	-	2	3	1	1	-	1	-
Not traced	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	<u>24</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>29</u>

Of the 29 infant deaths occurring in 1957, 9 died within 24 hours, a further 9 less than a week old and 4 during the first months and 7 between 6 months and 12 months old.

The neo-natal death rate was therefore 19.5 compared with 8.3 in 1956.



## Sex of Infants

The sex ratio of 1,165 boys to every 1,000 girl infants is higher than last year.

## Illegitimate Births (per 1,000 total births)

	<u>England and Wales</u>	<u>Watford</u>
1939	42	50
1944	68	72
1945	94	95
1946	67	66
1947	52	58
1948	51	52
1949	50	56
1950	51	36
1951	51	49
1952	46	49
1953	46	43
1954	46	56
1955	45	56
1956	46	52
1957	46	37

## Laboratory Services

Provision is available for investigation of all outbreaks of infectious disease and as will be seen from the Chief Public Health Inspector's report help was willingly given when it was necessary to investigate small outbreaks of food poisoning.

## National Assistance Act, 1948

### Section 47 (Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention)

Several cases were investigated but no legal action was taken.

### Section 50 (Burials)

Arrangements were made on five occasions (three in 1956)

Below are set out the birth rates and principal mortality rates from 1939. The infant mortality rate is expressed as per 1,000 registered live-births. The maternal mortality rate is expressed as per 1,000 live and still-births registered during the year under review. The remaining rates are per 1,000 of population.

Year	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Infantile Mortality Rate	Maternal Mortality Rate	Tuberculosis Death Rate	Cancer Death Rate
1939	15.3	10.7	36.1	0.00	0.57	1.88
1940	15.1	11.7	44.3	5.90	0.59	1.35
1941	13.8	10.9	55.06	0.90	0.58	1.62
1942	17.4	10.9	28.4	1.50	0.56	1.75
1943	16.5	12.4	40.0	1.74	0.32	1.75
1944	19.7	14.8	32.0	3.69	0.50	1.59
1945	17.4	11.6	28.2	0.84	0.58	2.04
1946	18.6	10.1	23.3	1.51	0.36	1.68
1947	19.6	10.8	28.6	0.69	0.23	1.94
1948	15.7	10.3	24.2	0.00	0.37	1.81
1949	14.7	10.8	18.5	0.00	0.36	2.06
1950	13.9	10.8	23.1	0.00	0.24	1.61
1951	14.0	11.4	18.7	0.00	0.22	1.66
1952	14.1	11.1	25.2	0.00	0.15	1.98
1953	13.3	11.9	25.9	3.05	0.17	1.90
1954	14.0	10.5	18.7	2.89	0.05	1.94
1955	14.4	11.5	13.4	0.00	0.10	2.06
1956	14.9	11.1	13.9	0.00	0.22	2.01
1957	14.8	11.0	26.9	0.00	0.11	2.40

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Notified Infectious Diseases, 1957 (Corrected)

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Under</u>									<u>Over Age un-</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>1</u>	<u>1-2</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>5-9</u>	<u>10-14</u>	<u>15-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>Known</u>	
Scarlet Fever	1	1	8	45	9	2	1	-	-	-	-	67
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poliomyelitis												
-Paralytic	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	4
Poliomyelitis												
-Non-paralytic	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Meningococcal												
infections	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	1	1	-	2	2	1	2	2	12	7	-	30
Erysipelas	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jaundice	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	5
Whooping Cough	19	37	55	138	12	-	4	-	-	-	-	265
Measles	13	176	270	500	13	3	1	-	-	-	-	976
Food Poisoning	-	-	-	-	2	8	7	4	2	-	2	25
Dysentery	-	3	2	15	5	2	3	2	-	-	1	33
Paratyphoid Fever	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Acute Encephalitis												
(infective)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Acute Encephalitis												
(Post Vaccinal)		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	34	219	336	703	45	19	22	9	16	7	3	1413

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION 1957

(1956 figures in brackets)

	<u>Under 5</u>	<u>Over 5</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Reinforcing</u>
a. <u>County Staff</u>				
1. Watford Borough	519(532)	88 (98)	607 (630)	468 (822)
2. Remaining Area of S. W. Herts	727 (954)	121 (140)	848 (1094)	755 (803)
b. <u>General</u>	750 (729)	30 (8)	780 (737)	144 (163)
<u>Practitioners</u>				
	1996 (2215)	239 (246)	2235 (2461)	1367 (1788)

## Whooping Cough Immunisation

The figures for Watford Borough were as follows:

Completed Cases - 475

## Anti-Poliomyelitis Vaccination

South West Herts:

Completed Cases - 6751

## Smallpox

No smallpox contacts were investigated.

## Vaccination against Smallpox

1,671 children under five years were vaccinated in South West Hertfordshire, with the probability that approximately half of them lived in the Borough. This represents a slight increase over the figure for 1956 (1397).

## TUBERCULOSIS

	New cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 4	6	4	-	1	-	-	-	-
5 - 9	3	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
10 - 14	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 19	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 - 24	3	4	-	1	1	-	-	-
25 - 34	5	10	-	1	-	-	-	-
35 - 44	12	2	2	-	2	1	-	-
45 - 54	12	3	-	-	2	-	-	-
55 - 64	11	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
65 and over	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Untraced	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	60	32	2	4	6	2	-	-



COMPARATIVE STATISTICS 1920 - 1956

NEW CASES

DEATHS

Year	Population	Pul.	Non-Pul.	Total	Rate per 1,000 pop.	Pul.	Non-Pul.	Total	Rate per 1,000 pop.
1957	73,050	92	6	98	1.34	8	-	8	0.10
1956	72,520	54	6	60	0.83	13	3	16	0.22
1955	72,420	74	7	81	1.12	6	1	7	0.10
1954	72,490	77	5	82	1.13	4	-	4	0.05
1953	72,610	79	2	81	1.12	12	-	12	0.17
1952	73,200	73	11	84	1.15	9	2	11	0.15
1951	72,700	97	9	106	1.46	14	2	16	0.22
1950	74,380	66	12	78	1.05	16	2	18	0.24
1945	67,070	88	12	100	1.49	34	5	39	0.58
1940	67,430	52	4	56	0.83	37	1	38	0.59
1935	63,200	91	20	111	1.76	39	5	44	0.70
1930	55,870	116	11	127	2.27	44	-	44	0.79
1925	48,990	93	23	116	2.37	51	4	55	1.12
1920	48,027	124	19	143	2.98	40	8	48	1.00

## Report on the Water Supply

Mr. L. C. Kimberlin, A.M.I.C.E., M.I.W.E., Water Engineer and Manager, has kindly supplied the following information:-

1. The supply has been satisfactory both in quantity and quality throughout the year 1957. The total quantity of water supplied for all purposes to the Corporation's statutory water area, which comprises the Borough of Watford (except the Oxhey area to the south of the River Colne, served by the Colne Valley Water Company) and approximately 1.50 square miles of the Watford Rural District, mostly to the north of the Borough, was 1,088 million gallons, or 2,982,000 gallons per day.
2. The supply from Watford Fields Pumping Station, which is about one third of the total supply, was softened by the lime softening process, and in April 1957, softening of the other two thirds by the base-exchange process commenced at the Grove Pumping Station. Since that date therefore the whole of the supply throughout the Corporation's statutory area has been softened water.
3. The Corporation's water undertaking is one of four selected by the Ministry of Health to carry out the initial fluoridation of the public water supply in Great Britain. The fluoridation plant was put into operation at both sources of supply in May 1956 and a fluoride content of 1 part per million, the content prescribed by the Ministry, has been satisfactorily maintained since that date.

Colorimetric tests of the fluoride content of water going into supply are carried out twice daily at both pumping stations and once daily of samples drawn from four points in the distribution system. In addition, four samples (one from each pumping station and two from the distribution system) are taken weekly and sent to the Government Chemist's Department for test by the Distillation process, which in addition to being a test of the fluoride content is also a check on the accuracy of the colorimetric tests carried out by the Water Department personnel. Finally, a monthly report is made to the Government Chemist setting out the weight of fluoride used each day allied to the quantity of water treated, and the resultant fluoride content by calculation and as found by the tests.

4. Bacteriological examinations of the supply were made regularly, by the Counties Public Health Laboratories, London, as follows:-

### Watford Fields Supply:

Raw Water	Monthly
Treated Water	Weekly
High Level Reservoir	Monthly
Low Level Reservoir	Fortnightly

Chlorine residual tests of the water leaving the pumping station were taken hourly, and the supplies from the High Level and Low Level Reservoirs were similarly tested, at 4 - hourly intervals and twice daily respectively.

The Grove Pumping Station Supply:

Raw Water	Fortnightly
Treated Water )	Monthly, staggered fortnightly
Reservoir )	

The chlorine residual of the water going into supply is indicated and continuously recorded on a residual recorder installed in 1956.

With the exception of a slight abnormality in two samples from the Watford Fields Pumping Station caused by bacteria of a non-faecal type, which were eliminated by the super-chloramine treatment before going into supply, and one from the Grove supply, all the analyses showed the supply to be of a high standard of bacterial purity.

5. Chemical analyses of the water at both Pumping Stations were taken periodically during the year, all of which were very satisfactory.

There is no plumbo solvency.

6. A survey of water supplies to temporary dwellings, and also to the few permanent dwellings which have no main supply within the premises, revealed the following position:-

(a) Temporary dwellings at:-

106, Leavesden High Road.	Caravan dwellers have a standpipe in yard (population 3).
Rear of 82, Leavesden High Road.	One caravan dweller uses a standpipe supply.
275, Sheepcot Lane.	6 persons occupying 2 caravans share one standpipe.

(b) Permanent Dwellings at:-

Leavesden High Road (112-118 even numbers)	4 families share one standpipe supply (population 13).
Leavesden High Road (120 - 124B - 5 houses)	5 families share one standpipe supply (population 28)
Forge Cottages, Leavesden Nos. 5 and 6.	2 families use 2 standpipe supplies (population 4)

Waterdell Farm Cottage

One family uses standpipe supply  
(population 5).

---



# REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

## HOUSING

### 1. CLEARANCE OF "SLUM" HOUSES

A start was made in 1956 on the clearance of the 110 unfit houses remaining in the Borough and the good progress which was made during that year was continued during 1957.

The Clearance Order in respect of the 13 houses in the West Street Clearance Area was confirmed by the Minister on the 8th April, 1957. By the end of the year all the families had been re-housed and demolition work was in progress.

There was a delay in the making of the Watford Field Road Clearance Order. This was not made until the 18th November, 1957.

The following houses were represented to the Council during 1957 as being unfit for human habitation.

#### Clearance Areas

- (i) Carey Place Clearance Area: Comprising the 6 houses Nos. 1 - 6 Carey Place.
- (ii) High Road Leavesden Clearance Area: Comprising the 10 houses Nos. 110 - 124b, High Road, Leavesden.

The Council resolved on the 29th July 1957, to deal with the above two areas by way of Compulsory Purchase Orders. These had not been confirmed by the end of the year.

The owner of one of the properties in Carey Place has objected to the confirmation of the Order.

#### Individual Unfit Houses represented under Part II of the Housing Act.

No. 70A Sheepcot Lane  
No. 1A Carey Place  
No. 205 Pinner Road  
No. 4 Sotheron Road  
Nos. 101 & 103 Sutton Road  
Nos. 228, 230, 232 & 234 High Street  
Nos. 264, 266 & 268 High Street  
Bushey Mead House, Water Lane  
Bushey Mead Cottage, Water Lane

With the exception of No. 101 Sutton Road all the above houses had been vacated by the end of the year.

In March, 1957 the Council accepted an undertaking from the owner of 70A Sheepcot Lane, which is a wooden structure, that it would be vacated and would not be re-let for human habitation. After the owner, who is an old lady, had obtained possession she instructed a builder to renew the roof and upon completion of this work she re-let the house to another family without the knowledge or consent of the Council. A Demolition Order was therefore made by the Council in October, 1957 and the owner appealed to the County Court against the Order. Before the case was heard the owner was able to obtain vacant possession of the house and by agreement the Judge revoked the Order and accepted an undertaking from the owner that the house would not be re-let for human habitation.

Since the resumption of slum clearance in 1956, 61 houses have been represented to the Council as being unfit for human habitation and action has been taken to secure the demolition or closure of these houses. 43 of them had been vacated by the end of 1957.

## 2. REPAIR OF UNFIT HOUSES

During the year 173 houses were made reasonably fit for human habitation as a result of action under the Housing and Public Health Acts.

93 of these houses were made fit by informal action on the part of the Public Health Inspectors. Of the 80 Statutory Notices which were served the Council enforced 25 by carrying out the specified works in default of the owners. In several cases this was at the request of the owners.

The owner of No. 73 Grover Road appealed to the County Court against the Council's demand for payment following the execution of works in the enforcement of a Section 9 Housing Act Notice. The appeal was based on the specific ground that the Council had carried out work in excess of the requirements of the Notice and generally had acted unreasonably. The main question on the appeal related to the repointing of the front elevation of the house. An agreement was reached before the hearing as a result of which the Judge dismissed the appeal and the owner's objections were reported to the Public Health Committee.

The owner of No. 249 High Street appealed to the County Court against a Notice served under Section 9 of the Housing Act on the grounds that the house could not be made fit at a reasonable cost. Following a conference between the owner's representatives and Council officials the owner was satisfied that the Notice could be complied with at less than half the expense he had estimated. He therefore withdrew his appeal.

## 3. RENT ACT, 1957

One of the main objectives of the Rent Act, 1957 is to enable rented houses to be

kept in good repair by permitting increases in the rents. Those provisions of the Act dealing with houses remaining in control are coupled with machinery dealing with repairs.

If a landlord and tenant fail to reach agreement on the defects which ought reasonably to be remedied the tenant can apply to the Council for a Certificate of Disrepair. No items of disrepair can be included in a Certificate other than those which the tenant has specified in the Notice (Form G) which he has served on his landlord.

The Act came into force on the 6th July, 1957 and the first application for a Certificate of Disrepair was received on the 17th September; from this date until the end of the year 73 applications were received. The manner in which these were dealt with is set out in Table V in the Appendix.

The Council decided to implement the recommendation of the Minister of Housing and Local Government that the fullest use should be made of the powers of the Housing Act and the Public Health Acts to secure that essential work is done. A complete inspection has therefore been made of all the houses concerned and appropriate statutory action has been taken whenever necessary.

It is our experience that far more defects of repair have been omitted from the Forms G than have been included erroneously. Notices have, however, been served on the landlords to remedy all the serious defects which have been found and these include such items as absence of damp proof courses and inadequate food stores which in any case cannot be included on a Form G.

This Act has imposed a considerable amount of additional work on the Health Department. Firstly there is the time which is spent by the Public Health Inspectors inspecting the houses and recording not only the Form G disrepairs but also the other defects which can be dealt with under the Public Health and Housing Acts. To this must be added the time which is spent on the preparation of reports and the various prescribed forms. The work involved has, however, been dovetailed into the Council's long term campaign to improve the habitability of these dwellings.

There is one effect of the Rent Act, 1957 which is worthy of note. As a direct result of the permitted increase in controlled rents the investment values of many rent controlled properties have been enhanced, oftentimes quite considerably. 26 houses which the Council had scheduled for demolition or closure in their five year programme as houses which could not be made fit at a reasonable expense have been deleted from the programme. The Council are now of the opinion that the relationship between the cost of repairing these houses and their values after the repairs have been completed has so changed that the houses can now be made fit at a reasonable expense. The owner of a terrace of 12 of these houses is of the same opinion and has submitted a reconditioning scheme to the Council which has been accepted.



#### 4. IMPROVEMENT OF HOUSES

Applications for Improvement Grants are dealt with by the Borough Engineer. 53 Grants were authorised by the Council during 1957. All but one of these were made to owner/occupiers.

During the year a scheme was prepared for the improvement of Nos. 1 - 13 St. John's Road, a terrace of seven houses which are owned by the Council. It was intended that in co-operation with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government three of the improved houses would be opened to the public for exhibition purposes to stimulate interest in the ways and means of modernising this kind of property. For several reasons, particularly the unforeseen high cost of the scheme, the Ministry decided not to proceed. After the tenants of four houses had been re-housed some hidden defects came to light and the Council therefore are reconsidering the whole scheme.

#### 5. MOVABLE DWELLINGS

The unauthorised placing of caravans within the Borough has caused a serious problem in Watford. During the period June, 1954, to February, 1957, no less than 269 summonses were issued by the Corporation involving 199 convictions and a total in fines of £736.

In January, 1957, land at the junction of the Watford By-Pass and High Road, Leavesden became so fouled by the caravan dwellers that statutory action had to be taken against the owner of the land under the Public Health Act, 1936 to abate the nuisance.

Because legal proceedings against the caravan dwellers were proving so ineffective the Council decided with some reluctance to take direct action. The caravans on the Watford By-Pass site were towed off; the land was cleansed by bulldozers and earth embankments were raised to prevent the re-occupation of the land by caravans. Similar works were carried out on land adjoining Tolpits Lane.

These measures have been successful, no attempt has been made by caravan dwellers to re-occupy these two sites and the occasional unauthorised placing of caravans on other sites has been dealt with expeditiously without recourse to legal proceedings.

### FOOD

#### 6. FOOD HYGIENE

The Council's ultimate sanction in the matter of unsatisfactory food handling lies in the enforcement of the Food Hygiene Regulations. The year under review has brought to light at least two matters in which the Regulations fall short of what might reasonably be accepted. These are the protection of open food from contamination and the observance of cleanly practices by persons employed in slaughterhouses.



A local authority in the Midlands failed to establish that unprotected fish was exposed to the risk of contamination, the Magistrates finding that it was necessary to prove that the contamination was injurious to public health; a very difficult matter. On appeal the Divisional Court upheld the Magistrate's decision.

Slaughterhouses are expressly excluded from the existing Regulations and the draft Regulations which have been issued concerning slaughterhouses do not include the requirements that persons handling meat in slaughterhouses shall be clean in their persons, clothing and habits. Two years operation of the Regulations have brought to light other anomalies and the time is ripe for their revision.

Education in correct food handling of those employed in the food trade is essential. At the present time there is no statutory requirement in this respect. Slaughtermen and dairymen are licensed and premises must be registered where made-up foods susceptible to dangerous contamination are handled. But no one enquires, or has the duty to enquire, whether the persons who are licensed or who are employed in registered premises have a sufficient knowledge of the trade in which they are engaged as to understand the public health risks involved.

Only a little progress can be reported in the matter of education within the food trade in Watford. At the College of Further Education courses for certificates in the meat and grocery trades have been established; a mere handful of young tradesmen, mostly sent by their employers, attends these courses. Lectures were indeed given by a public health inspector to employees of two large food concerns but since the trade (with but a few notable exceptions) does not seem to recognise the need for education in food hygiene an attempt was made, successfully, to interest the secondary schools. Eight lectures were given to senior pupils to supplement the instruction given by domestic science teachers. Talks were also given to various voluntary organisations.

All the food premises within the Borough have been inspected concerning compliance with the Food Hygiene Regulations and whenever contraventions have been found they have been, or are in the process of being remedied. A summary of the contraventions remedied in food premises in Table VI of the Appendix indicates the considerable amount of work carried out by the Inspectors.

The Council authorised legal proceedings in one case where the proprietor of a restaurant failed to provide the necessary fittings because there was uncertainty about the validity of his lease. A greengrocer in the Watford Market was convicted of smoking while handling open food after repeated warnings had proved ineffective; he was fined £5.

A Certificate of Exemption from the requirements of Regulations 16 and 19 was granted in respect of a small sweetshop selling only pre-packed sweets.

## 7. FOOD INSPECTION

### (i) MEAT

All food animals slaughtered at the two slaughterhouses in the Borough are inspected and to achieve this it has been necessary for the Inspectors to work overtime and on Sundays.

Advantage was taken of the Exchequer Grant made available by the Government in respect of the inspection of meat which was not for local consumption. Charges were again made in respect of additional work arising from the certification as to fitness for human consumption of beef exported to the Continent; 2,166 quarters of beef were exported during the year.

A happy relationship is enjoyed with the slaughterhouse managements and Watford Corporation has received helpful co-operation from their staffs. At the larger slaughterhouse which is old and ill-adapted for its purpose an internal re-arrangement has improved the conditions in which pig slaughtering is carried out and a boning-out room has been provided. It was hoped that an office and cloakroom might be provided for the Inspectors but this was not possible. However, clothing cabinets, a table and chair at one end of the boning-out room together with a wash-basin have made conditions much more comfortable. Formerly there was nowhere for the Inspector conveniently to change and store his clothing or to complete official records. The simple amenities provided have therefore proved most welcome.

The identification of pig plucks with carcasses is now achieved at this slaughterhouse by hanging the plucks on racks with numbered hooks, the corresponding number being pencilled on the carcass by the slaughterman. The system has the merit of simplicity but like all systems is not proof against human error.

In the summer, difficulties arose at the larger slaughterhouse in the manner of storage and removal of inedible offals and manure. This failure to comply with the relevant Byelaws was reported to the Council. Satisfactory arrangements were in fact made without the necessity for legal proceedings but not before a considerable nuisance was caused to the occupiers of neighbouring commercial premises. The slaughterhouse is situated in the heart of the town's principal shopping area (see Slaughterhouse Policy below).

Statistics relating to meat inspection at the slaughterhouses will be found in the Appendix. Table IX shows that considerable success attends the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to eradicate Bovine Tuberculosis. The Ministry plan to make all herds in the country into attested herds by 1961 and it may well be that after that date Bovine Tuberculosis will become a rare condition in the slaughterhouse. One noteworthy outcome of this campaign is the marked decrease in the weight of carcass beef condemned, i.e. from  $36\frac{1}{2}$  tons in 1947 to  $5\frac{3}{4}$  tons in 1957.

The slaughterhouse managers have been authorised to dispose of condemned meat and offals to six firms of repute whose methods and processing have been approved by the appropriate public health inspectors. This meat is impregnated with a green dye before it leaves the slaughterhouse premises.

## Cysticercus Bovis

139 cases of *Cysticercus Bovis* were discovered in the 4,960 cattle slaughtered in Watford during 1957. This gives an incidence rate of 2.8% compared with 3.7% in 1956 and 2.6% in 1955.

All the infections were very light and the following table shows the sites of the cysts in the affected carcasses.

Carcasses showing infections which might be transmissible to man were sterilised by retaining the carcasses for three weeks at a temperature not exceeding 20°F.

	External Masseter Muscle	Internal Masseter Muscle	Tongue	Heart	Diaphragm
Viable Cysts	19	7	-	4	1
Degenerate Cysts	47	9	-	56	4

The cysts in 31 cases (22.3%) were viable indicating that the infections were of recent origin. This compared with 27.8% for 1956.

## Slaughterhouse Policy

Following consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, local authority and trade interests, the Public Health Committee reached the conclusion that a municipal slaughterhouse was not required in Watford. The Committee were aware of the interest of the Union International Company in acquiring a site within the Borough which had already been earmarked for a slaughterhouse and the Council were therefore recommended to enter into negotiations with that Company for the construction of a new slaughterhouse and meat factory, it being clearly understood that in the Committee's view it was vitally necessary that the slaughterhouse in the centre of the town be no longer used when the new one came into operation. The Council accepted the Committee's recommendation and at the end of the year negotiations with the Company were proceeding.

## Slaughter of Animals Acts

16 full licences and 1 restricted licence have been issued by the Council. It has not been necessary to report to the Council any infringement of this legislation.

## Diseases of Animals Acts

One case of Swine Fever was notified to the police, the authorised officers for



the purposes of the Act, who supervised the destruction of the carcase and the disinfection of the slaughterhouse concerned.

(ii) MILK

Close supervision has been maintained on the purity of milk sold within the Borough and 102 samples have been submitted to the Bacteriologist at the Public Health Laboratory, Watford. All these samples complied with the statutory standards.

One case of milk sold in a dirty bottle and four cases of foreign matter in milk were reported to the Council. A warning letter was sent to the dairyman in each case except one concerning a piece of glass; the glass came from the bottle rim which could have been damaged in the complainant's home.

Details of dairies and distributors of milk registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949 and of licences granted under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations, 1949, will be found in the Appendix.

Specification of Areas

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has specified that milk of a special designation only may be sold in Watford and adjacent districts.

(iii) ICE CREAM

There are five premises within the Borough in which ice cream is manufactured; they are kept under close supervision although the producers are well aware of the importance of maintaining a high standard of hygiene throughout their processing, storage and distribution.

(iv) WATERCRESS

There are several watercress beds in Cassiobury Park and these are operated by two growers. Bacteriological examinations of the water and the cress revealed serious contamination. The growers were persuaded to sterilise all the cut cress in a hypochlorite solution before despatch to the wholesalers. The efficiency of the sterilisation is tested by bacteriological examinations of the cress after dipping.

(v) UNSOUND FOOD

Thirteen complaints of unsatisfactory foods purchased by members of the public were reported to the Council as follows:-

Mould:            2 Swiss Rolls and a Pork Patty.

Foreign Matter:

Handkerchief in veal and ham pie; nail in a scone; glass in sausage; glass, insect, tobacco, string, oil in bread; maggot in currants; piece of metal in a medicinal tablet.

Legal proceedings against the manufacturer of the tablet were authorised. In all other cases except two warning letters were sent to the producers of the foods. Responsibility for the condition of one Swiss roll could not be established.

Valuable assistance was received from a commercial research laboratory in investigating a complaint that a piece of glass had been found in a sliced loaf; by physical tests it was shown that the glass had probably originated from an item of cheap tableware. Although the complainant was sure that the glass was in a slice of bread taken from the packet, a chipped butter dish was found in her house into which the glass splinter fitted exactly.

Sixteen other cases were investigated and appropriate action taken by the public health inspectors. One concerned the heavy contamination in a railway waggon of the hessian wrappings of 20 sides of bacon by naphthalene, the odour clinging to the bacon after the wrappings were removed. The prompt assistance of the British Railways Chemist helped to "save the bacon".

8. FOOD POISONING

Three outbreaks of food poisoning involving twenty-two persons and six single sporadic cases were notified during the year. None of these was fatal.

Three of the single cases appeared to be associated; they were all notified within a period of ten days in July and August and the causative organism was *Salmonella* para-typhi B. Phage type III A, an organism which is specific to imported Chinese egg. At the same time two other cases occurred in adjoining districts from the same cause.

The Minister of Health was informed and a careful investigation was made into the origins of all batches of imported egg used in Watford. Samples were submitted to the Bacteriologist as also were samples of various made-up foodstuffs but we were unable to identify the food which contained the unfit egg as an ingredient.

Once again I must express my appreciation of the valuable assistance which has so readily been given by the Public Health Laboratory Service in the work we have carried out during the year to prevent and control food poisoning.

A summary of the cases will be found in Table XIV in the Appendix.

Food Infections Research

Dr. Betty Hobbs of the Central Public Health Laboratory and other workers have



isolated Salmonellae (food poisoning organisms) from the flesh of home killed pigs and imported frozen veal. Specimens have been procured locally, in furtherance of this research, of meat, pig faeces and animal feeding stuffs and our thanks are due to the trades concerned who have willingly made the specimens available.

9. MERCHANDISE MARKS ACTS, 1887 & 1926

As a Food & Drugs Authority, the Council is charged with the enforcement of these Acts so far as they relate to foodstuffs. It is a responsibility which the Inspectors keep in mind when they visit food shops but no serious infringements were found during the year.

10. COMPOSITION OF FOODS & DRUGS

The report of the Public Analyst, Mr. C. W. McHugo, on the samples submitted for examination during the year 1957 is as follows:-

Number of samples examined: 38 Formal (Milks) and 92 Informal.

(i) Milk Samples

The Milks were of good quality and complied with the Regulations in respect of their composition and freedom from Preservatives.

(ii) Other Samples

(a) Foods

Sausages and other meat products.  
Ice cream and soft drinks.  
Sweets and biscuits.  
Flour and cereal foods.  
Preserves and canned foods.  
Flavouring and colouring ingredients.

(b) Drugs

Slimming Tablets.  
Aspirin.  
D.D.D. Balm.  
Saccharin Tablets.  
Mist. Sodii Salicyl. Co.  
Emulsio Kaolin Co.  
Hydrarg Oxid. Flav. B. P.

A sample of peach jam had a soluble solids content slightly below the prescribed

minimum and Yellow Mercuric Ointment (Hydrarg Oxid. Flav. B. P. ) was 30% deficient in Mercuric Oxide. Otherwise the food products were of good quality in a sound edible condition, and complied with the requirements of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955, and with their respective Statutory standards where applicable and the samples of drugs complied with the British Pharmacopoeia. The manufacturers of the ointment admitted the deficiency and modified their process to ensure proper mixing.

(c) Sausages

One sample of sausage meat and thirteen samples of sausages, 11 consisting of Pork and 3 of Beef, were examined.

With perhaps one exception the meat content of these sausages was satisfactory in relation to the price charged. Two minor irregularities in relation to preservative content were found.

(d) Ice Cream

Six samples from local manufacturers fully complied with the Food Standards (Ice Cream) Order, 1953, No. 828.

(iii) Special Samples

(e) White Bread

Tobacco leaf was found in a loaf and rust and oil in a roll.

(f) Tinned Salmon

Glass-like fragments in the tin were found to consist of magnesium ammonium phosphate (struvite). This normal constituent of tinned fish often crystallises out in storage.

(g) A. P. C. Tablet

A piece of metal said to have been found in a medicinal tablet had crystals adhering to it similar in composition and microscopic appearance to an A. P. C. tablet from the same bottle.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

11. INDUSTRIAL CHIMNEYS

The emission of smoke from factory chimneys is not a serious problem in Watford. Of the 63 industrial boiler plants within the Borough only 3 have caused a

nuisance during the year. The following action was taken to abate these nuisances:-

- (i) An Abatement Notice was served in respect of intermittent emissions of smuts from the chimney of a sweet factory. As a result a smoke recorder was installed and several alterations were made to the plant on the advice of the National Industrial Fuel Efficiency Service. A daily inspection of grit deposit plates was made by the District Inspector and towards the end of the year we were satisfied that the nuisance had been abated.
- (ii) The emission of black smoke and smuts from the chimney of a large printing factory was brought under control by adaptations to the boiler plant. A scheme has been prepared for the complete renewal of the boiler plant and the first stage should be completed during 1958.
- (iii) Representations were made to the Regional Hospital Board concerning the emission of black smoke from a hospital chimney. This occurred during periods of hot weather when the load on the boiler was very light and the automatic stoker control failed to be effective. The Regional Engineer carried out an investigation and the alterations he made to the plant led to a considerable improvement.

In addition to the above smoke nuisances a serious nuisance has been caused in the vicinity of the Gas Works by fumes from an experimental Complete Gasification Plant and grit from other sources. A meeting was arranged between members of the Council, several of the complainants and officers of the Eastern Gas Board when the whole problem was discussed. It is hoped that the measures which are being taken will alleviate the nuisance.

#### Height of New Chimneys

Plans were submitted to the Borough Engineer for the installation of five 30,000 lb/hour boilers and these showed five separate chimneys each 60 ft. high. The Council rejected these plans and the factory management accepted the Council's stipulation that the boilers must be served by one brick chimney of a minimum height of 120 ft.

#### Prior Approval of New Furnaces

In all new boiler installations it is the practice of the Council to advise the factory management of the "prior approval" provisions of the Clean Air Act, 1956. One application has been made to the Council for the prior approval of a boiler plant.

### 12. CLEAN AIR POLICY

The Council has decided in principle to declare two Smoke Control Areas in Watford. These are -



- (i) The Meriden Estate of 256 acres on the north-east extremity of the Borough. This estate is now in course of development and it comprises 139 privately owned pre-war houses and 588 houses recently erected by the Council. The development will be completed by the erection of a further 500 houses by the Council.
- (ii) The Holywell Estate of 305 acres on the south-west extremity of the Borough. This is a new residential and industrial estate in course of development. 343 Council houses have been completed and a further 445 are to be built. The first factories will be constructed during 1958.

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government gave provisional clearance to the Council's outline proposals on the 4th December, 1957.

The Council has resolved to adopt the Model Byelaws made under Section 24 of the Clean Air Act, 1956 requiring the provision in new buildings of approved firegrates.

### 13. RESEARCH INTO ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

The Council has given very careful consideration during the year to the establishment of volumetric smoke, sulphur dioxide and standard deposit gauges within the Borough. Eventually it was decided that the problem in Watford was not so serious as to justify the expense involved in the purchase and operation of this equipment.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 14. FACTORIES

There is close co-operation between the Borough Engineer, the County Fire Protection Officer, and the Chief Public Health Inspector on all plans of new factories or alterations to existing premises which are submitted to the Council for approval. This procedure ensures that the premises will comply with the various legislative requirements before structural work commences.

The items which mainly concern the Health Department are the means of escape in case of fire; the storage and use of petroleum spirit and petroleum mixtures; the prevention of atmospheric pollution and other nuisances; and the lay-out and equipment of works canteens.

#### Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948

##### Part I. Health Provisions

Certain health provisions of the Act are enforced by the Council; a summary of the work carried out during 1957 will be found in tabular form in the Appendix.

##### Part II Safety, Section 34 - Means of Escape in Case of Fire

The Chief Public Health Inspector is the Corporation's authorised officer for this

work. 12 factories were surveyed during the year and as a result 9 new certificates as to adequate means of escape in case of fire were issued.

#### Part IV. Special Provisions - Section 54 - Underground Bakehouses

A certificate of suitability has been issued in respect of the one remaining underground bakehouse which is situated at 24 Langley Road.

#### Part VIII. Home Work - Section 110

The nature of the work undertaken by the 83 outworkers within the Borough is set out in Table XV.

#### 15. PETROLEUM (REGULATION) ACTS, 1928 & 1936

The Chief Public Health Inspector is appointed by the Council as the authorised officer for the purposes of these Acts.

150 premises are licensed for the storage of petroleum spirit and petroleum mixtures. Altogether the total quantity which is licensed to be stored within the Borough is 608,335 gallons. Three licences have been granted for the storage of 1,294 lbs. in total of carbide of calcium.

The Council has adopted a more stringent Code of Conditions subject to which Licences are granted and these came into force on the 1st of January, 1957. One of the new conditions requires that all underground tanks and pipelines shall be subjected to prescribed tests twenty years after installation and at specified intervals thereafter. In compliance with these conditions 166 installations have been tested at 88 premises. 9 tanks were found to be leaking, were condemned and made safe and 14 other minor defects were found in pumps and pipelines.

The Petroleum Spirit (Conveyance by Road) Regulations, 1957, came into force on 1st July. An abstract of these was sent to all persons in the town who receive bulk deliveries of petroleum spirit together with a notice for posting in a prominent position so that all employees may become acquainted with Regulation 16. No infringements of the Regulations have been found.

Not all highly inflammable liquids are petroleum spirits or petroleum mixtures within the meaning of the Petroleum Acts. Watford is an important printing centre and it is quite illogical that many thousands of gallons of highly inflammable ink solvents with a "flash point" considerably below 73°F, can be kept in factories without a statutory obligation to comply with the Council's conditions concerning the safety of the stores.

#### 16. SHOPS ACT, 1950

One of the recommendations in the Report on Organisation and Methods was that



a specialist Shops Act Inspector should not be appointed; the work involved is now carried out by the Public Health Inspectors and is found to dovetail conveniently with the inspections made in shop premises for other purposes.

Among the 227 visits made in this connection were several on Sundays and in the evenings for the purpose of detecting illegal trading. Early in the year complaints by the Watford Grocers Association regarding Sunday trading were investigated and seven offenders were reported to the Council. Warning letters were sent to them and subsequent inspections revealed that the traders concerned were complying with the law.

17. RAG FLOCK & OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

Nine premises in Watford are registered for upholstery work and two premises are licensed for the storage of rag flock.

It has not been necessary during the year to report any infringements of the Act to the Council.

18. HEATING APPLIANCES (FIREGUARDS) ACT, 1952

The Public Health Inspectors are appointed to inspect and test appliances under the above legislation.

It is unusual now to find a new appliance which does not comply with the appropriate standard and it is the sale of second-hand fires which engages the closest attention.

19. PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT

In common with other Councils within the County a standard for sanitary accommodation in places of public entertainment has been adopted for Watford to provide uniformity in the application of the Herts (Music & Dancing) Regulations, 1955.

Of the 37 licensed premises within the Borough 21 failed to comply fully with the Council's standard. As a result of informal representations the deficiencies in all but three of these have been made good during the year or the works required have been ordered.

20. PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

The Public Health Inspectors are appointed officers under Section 4 of the Act and for its enforcement they work in close co-operation with the local inspector of the R.S.P.C.A.

Fifteen persons are licensed to keep pet shops within the Borough and these have

been conducted satisfactorily.

21. PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

There are two rodent operatives employed in the Department and they are provided with a light van for the transport of poison baits etc.

Regular twice yearly treatment of the town's sewers (in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) over a period of years has revealed a heavy and apparently permanent infestation in the Watford Fields area and part of Queens Ward. In an endeavour to eliminate these "black spots" special treatments of these areas were carried out at quarterly, instead of half-yearly intervals. After four such treatments a careful study of the results indicated the probability that there had been a quite substantial reduction in the number of rats. The objective of clearing the rats, however, was far from being achieved, the last treatment showing 60% of manholes still infested. The special treatments have therefore been discontinued. The co-operation of the Borough Engineer enables the sewer treatments to be carried out smoothly and efficiently.

An analysis of surface infestations dealt with in the year 1957 reveals that the very great majority of them arose in domestic premises in areas where successive annual tests of the sewers have shown them to be free from rats, or in areas still unsewered. In the dozen treatments carried out in the "black" areas rats were found in railway banks, poultry runs, a fish shop, etc. In one case only did it appear that the infestation originated in the sewer. It is therefore pertinent to consider whether the expense of bi-annual sewer treatments can be justified.

The Council has continued its policy of providing a free service for domestic dwellings.

A summary of the work carried out in 1957 is set out in the prescribed form in the appendix (Table XVI).

# A P P E N D I X

## RECORD OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS 1957

### TABLE I

<u>Houses -</u>				
Public Health Act	...	...	...	231
Housing Act	...	...	...	165
Overcrowding	...	...	...	33
<u>Factories -</u>				
Factories with Mechanical Power	...	...	...	138
Factories without Mechanical Power	...	...	...	14
Building Sites	...	...	...	7
Workplaces	...	...	...	6
Outworkers	...	...	...	11
<u>General -</u>				
Refuse Accommodation	...	...	...	77
Tents, Vans and Sheds	...	...	...	195
Keeping of Animals	...	...	...	39
Theatres, Cinemas, etc.	...	...	...	41
Smoke Observations	...	...	...	738
Vacant Land and Refuse Tips	...	...	...	135
Verminous Premises	...	...	...	15
Fly Prevention	...	...	...	8
Other Insect Pests	...	...	...	17
Drainage Inspections and Tests	...	...	...	364
Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	312
Petroleum Acts	...	...	...	205
Shops Act	...	...	...	227
Pests Act	...	...	...	47
Pet Animals Act	...	...	...	8
Interviews with Owners, etc.	...	...	...	474
Unclassified Visits	...	...	...	721
<u>Revisits to Premises under Notice -</u>				
Public Health Act - Houses	...	...	...	337
Public Health Act - Other	...	...	...	205
Housing Act	...	...	...	1, 533
Other Revisits	...	...	...	44



<u>Meat and Foods -</u>				
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	1,187
Visits re Food Inspection	...	...	...	339
Butchers Shops	...	...	...	66
Fishmongers and Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	28
Grocers, Greengrocers and Fruiterers	...	...	...	148
Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	23
Restaurants and Dining Rooms	...	...	...	149
Public Market	...	...	...	169
Bakehouses	...	...	...	33
Other Food Premises	...	...	...	143
Food Hygiene Lectures	...	...	...	12
Milk Samples (Bacteriological)	...	...	...	102
Ice Cream Samples (ditto) ...	...	...	...	58
Food (Adulteration) Samples	...	...	...	134
(Bacteriological) Samples	...	...	...	19
				8,957

## H O U S I N G

TABLE II

### NEW HOUSES

The Borough Engineer has kindly supplied the under-mentioned information regarding new houses erected during 1957.

(a) Number of new houses erected by the Local Authority 469

(b) Number of new houses erected by private enterprise 180

Total number of houses built since 1945:-

(a) By the Local Authority 3,335

(b) By private enterprise 1,076

### COUNCIL HOUSES AND REQUISITIONED PROPERTIES - TABLE III

The Borough Treasurer has kindly supplied the following information:

(a) Number of Council houses occupied on 31st December 1957 = 5,074 plus 99 prefabricated bungalows.

(b) Number of requisitioned premises 22

(c) Number of families housed in requisitioned premises 29

NOTICES SERVED DURING 1957 RE HOUSING DEFECTS - TABLE IV.

A C T	I N F O R M A L	S T A T U T O R Y
Housing Act, 1936	92	57
Public Health Act, 1936	70	23

TABLE V - RENT ACT, 1957

PART I. APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF DISREPAIR

1.	Number of applications for certificates	...	73
2.	Number of decisions not to issue certificates	...	1
3.	Number of decisions to issue certificates		69
	(a) in respect of some but not all defects	...	41
	(b) in respect of all defects	...	28
4.	Number of undertakings given by landlords under Paragraph 5 of the First Schedule	...	42
5.	Number of undertakings refused by Local Authority under proviso to Paragraph 5 of the First Schedule	...	Nil
6.	Number of certificates issued	...	10

PART II. APPLICATIONS FOR CANCELLATION OF CERTIFICATES

No applications were received during the year for the cancellation of certificates.



# FOOD

## TYPES OF FOOD PREMISES WITHIN THE BOROUGH AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1957

TABLE VI

Bakehouses	...	...	...	22
Bakery and Flour Confectionery Shops	...	...	...	39
Sweetshops	...	...	...	114
Butchers	...	...	...	56
Fishmongers and Fried Fish	...	...	...	27
Greengrocers and Fruiterers	...	...	...	55
Grocers, General Stores	...	...	...	162
Wholesale Grocers	...	...	...	3
Wholesale Greengrocers	...	...	...	3
Wholesale Meat Salesmen	...	...	...	5
Cafes and Restaurants	...	...	...	69
Industrial and Commercial Canteens	...	...	...	64
School Canteens	...	...	...	36
Hotels and Public Houses	...	...	...	56
Unclassified Food Factories	...	...	...	10
Public Market	...	...	...	1
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	2

### Food Premises Registered by the Council

#### 1. Under Section 16, Food and Drugs Act, 1955

Ice Cream Manufacturers	...	...	6
Ice Cream Dealers	...	...	157
Preserved Food Manufacturers	...	...	47

#### 2. Art. 8 of Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949

Dairies	...	...	...	3
---------	-----	-----	-----	---

### MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) REGULATIONS, 1949

The Council has granted two Dealers Licences to pasteurise milk and one Dealers Licence to sterilise milk at dairies within the Borough. Licences for the sale of milk under the above Regulations were granted as follows:

Designated Milk	Dealers Licences	Supplementary Licences	Total
Tuberculin Tested Milk	10	2	12

Designated Milk	Dealers Licences	Supplementary Licences	Total
Pasteurised Milk	24	3	27
Sterilised Milk	21	1	22

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

DEFECTS REMEDIED IN FOOD PREMISES

TABLE VII

Food Rooms Reconstructed	...	...	...	6
Structural Repairs	...	...	...	9
Ventilation Improved	...	...	...	1
Lighting Improved	...	...	...	4
Rooms Cleansed and Redecorated		...	...	40
Apparatus, Utensils, etc., Cleansed, Repaired or Renewed	...	...	...	9
New Refuse Accommodation Provided		...	...	4
Sinks Repaired or Renewed	...	...	...	5
Additional Sinks Provided	...	...	...	6
Wash-basins Repaired or Renewed		...	...	2
Additional Wash-basins Provided		...	...	13
Constant Hot Water Provided	...	...	...	26
Soap and Towels Provided	...	...	...	5
Cloakroom Facilities	...	...	...	12
First-Aid Equipment	...	...	...	8
Other	...	...	...	5
				155

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS REJECTED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION DURING  
1957 - TABLE VIII

HOME KILLED MEAT AND OFFAL

(a) <u>Rejected at Slaughterhouses</u>	<u>lbs.</u>
Beef (including 18 carcasses)	12, 729
Lamb (including 2 carcasses)	71
Pork (including 28 carcasses)	3, 6 91
Veal (including 5 carcasses)	331

Offal from Bovines -lbs.

274 Heads	...	...	8,220
247 Tongues	...	...	1,235
907 Lungs	...	...	9,070
82 Hearts	...	...	410
864 Livers and 679 part Livers	...	...	16,440
39 Spleens	...	...	78
28 Skirts	...	...	56
17 Tails	...	...	34

Offal from Pigs -

251 Plucks	...	...	1,348
1,314 Livers	...	...	2,618
1,512 Lungs	...	...	3,029
437 Heads	...	...	5,205
334 Other Organs	...	...	200

Offal from Sheep -

10 Plucks	...	...	40
118 Livers	...	...	236
14 Lungs	...	...	26
2 Other Organs	...	...	5

Offal from Calves -

4 Heads	...	...	14
5 Plucks	...	...	18

(b) Condemned in Retail and Manufacturing Premises

Pork	...	...	...	...	538
Beef	...	...	...	...	1,113
Lamb	...	...	...	...	40
Veal	...	...	...	...	82

IMPORTED MEAT AND OFFAL

Beef	...	...	...	...	453
Mutton	...	...	...	...	57

OTHER FOODS INCLUDING CANNED GOODS

... 19,109

86,496

Total weight of food found to be unfit = 38 tons 12 cwts. 1 qtr. 4 lbs.

Of the above food 75.3% comprised meat and offal rejected in the slaughterhouses.

INCIDENCE OF DISEASE IN ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED IN WATFORD DURING 1957

TABLE IX

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed and inspected	3, 581	1, 379	204	5, 846	34, 216
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	1	3	5	2	28
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1, 176	379	-	144	3, 030
Percentage of the number inspected affected with diseases other than Tuberculosis	32.9	27.7	2.5	2.5	8.9
<u>Tuberculosis Only</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	3	11	-	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	158	191	-	-	402
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	4.5	14.6	-	-	1.2
<u>Cysticercosis</u>					
Carcasses in which cysticercosis was found	119	20			
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	61	7			



	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	78	11			
Generalised and totally condemned	NIL	NIL			

For comparison purposes, the percentages of the animals found to be diseased during the post-war years are set out below: -

TABLE X

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Percentage of the number inspected affected with diseases other than Tuberculosis:					
1947	38.6	35.8	0.8	8.7	16.8
1948	39.3	37.0	0.9	5.2	27.9
1949	42.4	37.5	0.8	4.5	20.6
1950	42.5	39.8	0.9	7.3	14.3
1951	40.9	40.4	0.9	4.5	14.5
1952	41.3	43.0	1.2	6.7	15.4
1953	34.5	35.2	1.9	9.6	20.8
1954	34.4	29.6	3.2	6.9	14.6
1955	36.2	30.9	0.6	5.9	11.4
1956	36.3	31.0	0.4	6.6	9.1
1957	32.9	27.7	2.5	2.5	8.9

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis:					
1947	12.3	48.7	0.07	-	3.1
1948	12.4	44.5	0.5	-	7.9
1949	10.0	38.6	0.2	-	5.1
1950	10.5	36.5	0.4	-	5.5
1951	8.0	29.3	0.3	-	3.0
1952	7.6	26.8	0.2	-	3.7
1953	8.1	22.8	0.1	-	3.7
1954	7.0	22.1	0.5	-	2.4
1955	6.9	19.3	-	-	1.3
1956	6.2	20.4	-	-	1.1
1957	4.5	14.6	-	-	1.2

#### BACTERIOLOGICAL MILK SAMPLES - TABLE XI

Pasteurised	Tuberculin Tested Pasteurised	Sterilised
55	23	24

All the samples were satisfactory

#### ICE CREAM SAMPLES

#### BACTERIOLOGICAL SAMPLES - TABLE XII

No. of Samples	Satisfactory - Grades 1 & 2	Unsatisfactory - Grades III & IV
58	53	5

91.4% of the samples were satisfactory

## CHEMICAL SAMPLES

The statutory minimum content for ice cream is 5 per cent fat, 10 per cent sugar and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent milk solids other than fat.

TABLE XIII

Sample Number	Fat Content	Sugar Content	Milk Solids
1	11.5	13.0	8.6
2	10.5	12.6	10.0
3	6.8	14.6	11.9
4	10.3	11.6	9.8
5	8.6	14.8	10.9
6	11.7	12.7	10.4

## FOOD POISONING 1957

TABLE XIV

Number of Outbreaks	Number of Cases	Number of Deaths	Organism responsible	Food Suspected
1	1	-	Salmonella typhimurium	Unknown
1	16	-	Not identified	Steak Pie
1	1	-	Not identified	Unknown
1	2	-	Not identified	Unknown
1	1	-	Salmonella para B phage type III A	Infected Chinese egg an ingredient of unidentified foods

Number of Outbreaks	Number of Cases	Number of Deaths	Organism responsible	Food Suspected
1	1	-	Salmonella para B phage type III A	Infected Chinese egg an ingredient of unidentified foods
1	1	-	-ditto-	-ditto-
1	1	-	Salmonella typhimurium	Unknown
1	4	-	Not identified	Unknown

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 & 1948

TABLE XIV

Part 1 - Health Provisions

	Number on Register	Number of Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	47	14	-	-
Factories not included above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	349	138	-	-
Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	7	7	-	-
Total -	403	159	-	-



Cases in which defects were found

	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H. M. Insp.	By H. M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness (S. 1)	2	1	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (Section 7)					
(a) Insufficient				1	
(b) Unsuitable or defective	6	5		1	
(c) Not separate for sexes	2	1			
Other offences against the Act.	-	-	-	-	
Total -	10	7		2	

Part VIII - Outwork (Sections 110 and 111)

Nature of Work	Number of out-workers as required by section 110 (1) (c)
Wearing apparel making	14
Artificial flowers	36
Brush Making	21
Stuffed toys	2
Christmas crackers, etc.	10
	83

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

REPORT FOR 12 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1958

TABLE XVI

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				(5) Agricul- tural
	(1) Local Author- ity	(2) Dwell- ing Houses	(3) All other (includ- ing Business Premises)	(4) Total of Cols. 1, 2, & 3	
1. Number of properties in Local Authority's District (Notes 1 and 2)	68	22,381	3,081	25,530	-
II. Number of properties inspected as a result of:					
(a) Notification	7	292	47	346	-
(b) Survey under the Act	6	748	21	775	-
(c) Otherwise (e. g. when visited primarily for some other purposes)	-	501	596	1,097	-
III. Number of properties inspected (in Sect. II) which were found to be infested by:					
(a) Rats (Major + 20 Minor)	9 2	225 117	16 4	250 123	- -
(b) Mice (Major + 20 Minor)	- -	63 3	26 1	89 4	- -
IV. Number of infested properties (in Sect. IV) treated by the L. A.	11	408	44	463	-
V. Number of notices served under Section 4 of the Act	-	-	-	-	-
VI. Number of "Block" control schemes carried out	1	135	1	137	-

Subscription Price, \$5.00 per Annum in Advance  
Single Copies, 15 Cents

CONTENTS			
Original Articles	1	1	1
Editorial	1	1	1
Correspondence	1	1	1
Obituary	1	1	1
Book Reviews	1	1	1
News and Notes	1	1	1
Announcements	1	1	1
Advertisements	1	1	1